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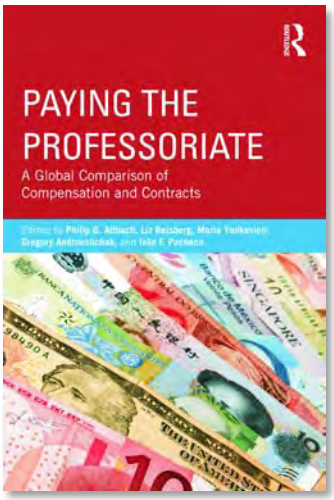
Paying the Professoriate

A Global Comparison of Compensation and Contracts

Edited by Philip Altbach, Liz Reisberg, Maria Yudkevich, Gregory Androushchak and Iván Pacheco



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BRAZIL

The Widening Gap

Simon Schwartzman

Brazilian legislation assumes that all higher education institutions should evolve to become full-fledged universities, with well-qualified, tenured, well-paid, and full-time staff—doing good-quality teaching and research. In fact, some institutions, particularly in the public sector, are moving in this direction, with some limitations. However, most of the private institutions, which account for 75 percent of the student enrollment, are not undergoing such changes. Few of their teachers have advanced degrees; most work part time and have no job stability; and this reflects a wide gap in salaries and working conditions, when compared with those in the first group.

Overview

Brazil has a highly differentiated system of higher education, with a relatively small number of well-funded public institutions and a large number of private, for-profit, and philanthropic institutions. Brazil is a federation, with 27 states and more than 5,000 municipalities, and some of the public institutions are maintained by the federal government, others by states, and a small number by municipalities (Schwartzman 2004).

Traditionally, higher education institutions were organized in the European tradition, with faculties providing diplomas legally valid as licenses for the learned professions—medicine, law, engineering, architecture, and dentistry—and later in new professions such as business administration, psychology, communications, and pedagogy. In the European tradition, without undergraduate courses in the North American or English pattern, all students are admitted to professional degree programs. In 1968, new legislation introduced several features of North American higher education, including regular master's degree and doctoral

programs, the credit system, the replacement of chairs by academic departments, and strengthening the role of university rector.

The 1968 reform led to two divergent sectors. Higher education teaching in public universities became a career in the civil service—with competitive salaries and other benefits for full-time employment and promotions, based on academic criteria. Besides lecturing, higher education teachers are expected to do research and extension work; new graduate education programs were created to grant the advanced degrees required for these careers (Balbachevsky and Schwartzman 2010). This was followed by the creation or expansion of several research support agencies, both by the national and state governments. Private institutions, however, could not adopt the same organization model and career patterns as the public ones. Public institutions are fully supported with public funding and, legally, forbidden to charge tuition; private institutions, with very few exceptions, cannot receive public subsidies and depend on tuition to survive. Since public institutions attract the best-qualified students, typically coming from richer families, private institutions, with some exceptions, have to cater to low-income sectors that cannot pay much. Most of their students have to work, and, because of that, most of their courses are provided in the evenings.

This public system did not grow fast enough to accommodate the expanding demand for higher education, which was mostly absorbed by private institutions (Durham 2004). Today, about 75 percent of the enrollment in higher education in Brazil takes place in private institutions. The limited growth of public institutions can be explained given their high cost, due to the relatively high academic salaries and selective admission of students, based on *numerus clausus* and competitive entrance examinations for the different course programs. This was different from what has been happening in most other Latin American countries, where the rule was open admissions and the lack of well-paid careers for the academic staff in public institutions.

Private institutions, however, could not adopt the same organization model and career patterns of the public ones. Public institutions are fully supported with budgetary resources and legally forbidden to charge tuition. Private institutions, with few exceptions, cannot receive public subsidies and depend on tuition to survive. Since public institutions attract the best-qualified students—coming usually from richer families—private institutions (with some exceptions) have to cater to low-income sectors that cannot pay much. Most of their students need to work; and because of that, most of their courses are provided in the evening. The Brazilian legislation still assumes that all higher education should be organized in universities or eventually evolve into one—centered on high-quality academic research and Humboldt's ideal of integration between research and teaching. But in practice, few institutions—even in the public sector—can meet the standards of what a research university should be.

Currently, legislation allows for the existence of three main types of institutions: fully autonomous universities with graduate education and research; autonomous

"university centers," with no graduate education and research but, supposedly, good-quality teaching in different fields; and isolated faculties, with limited autonomy to create new courses and expand admission. To become a university, a private institution must demonstrate the existence of graduate education programs and research, among other criteria. Public universities, however, can be created by law. Formally, no difference exists in the standing of the degrees provided by these different types of institutions, once they are allowed to function. There are also a small number of technical institutes supported by the federal government, but Brazil never developed an extended system of technical, shorter higher education programs, such as the French Institutes Universitaires de Technologie.

In recent years, this picture has been changing in many ways. In the public sector, the federal government has been pressing public institutions to admit more students and to open evening courses. A program provides additional resources for federal universities willing to expand, many institutions are introducing quotas for low-income or minority students, and private universities are granted tax exemption if they admit a certain number of low-income students for free (MEC 2010). For some years, a tendency has been under way for the public sector to bring in more students from low-income sectors, in less competitive careers, and for some private institutions to cater more to richer students.

According to the Ministry of Education, in 2008 there were 2,252 institutions, 90 percent private, 5.1 million students in regular first-degree courses, and 75 percent in private institutions. Of these institutions, 183 had university status and 1,911 were isolated, nonuniversity institutions. The size of these institutions varies enormously. A small, isolated institution would have about 1,700 students on average—a university, 15,000. The largest private universities, with locations scattered in many cities, may enroll above 200,000; the largest public university, the University of São Paulo, has about 55,000 graduate (undergraduate) and 25,000 postgraduate students in 11 locations.

In 2009, there were 88,286 students in master's degree programs, 53,237 students in doctoral programs, and 9,122 students in professional master's degree programs. Of the 150,000 graduate (undergraduate) students, 80 percent were in public universities, one-third of them in the state of São Paulo. Some graduate programs are offered by public research institutes that are usually not classified as higher education institutions—such as the Institute of Applied and Pure Mathematics in Rio de Janeiro, the Brazilian Center for Physics Research, or the Oswaldo Cruz Institute in public health.

Academic Qualifications

In 2008, there were 338,900 higher education teaching posts in the country, or about 15 undergraduate (first university degree) students per teacher, with large variations among sectors: 10.6 students per teacher in the public sector and about 17.3 in the private sector. Approximately 76 percent of the academics in public

Table 6.1 Academic posts and contracts in higher education

	Public Universities	*Private Universities*	*Total*
Number of faculty	119,368	219,522	338,890
Full-time	91,608	40,774	132,382
Part-time	27,760	178,748	206,508

Source: Ministry of Education, Higher Education Census (MEC, INEP 2008).

Note: Data refer to teaching posts, not persons. The same person can have multiple posts.

institutions had full-time contracts, compared with just 18 percent in the private sector (see Table 6.1)

In federal universities, the academic career is comprised of five ranks—auxiliary, assistant, adjunct, associate, and full professor (*auxiliar, assistente, adjunto, associado, titular*). Each of these ranks, up to full professor, is divided into four levels. In principle, access to a university career should require a doctoral degree and success in an open formal competition (*concurso*). However, in federal institutions, a doctoral degree is not required for the first two rank levels. In the past, many teachers with just a first university degree were hired through provisional contracts, which were later transformed into permanent appointments. Promotion up to associate level is achieved by seniority and also by the acquisition of graduate degrees; promotion to full professorship, in principle, should also depend on success in an open competition. The government has stimulated academics in public institutions to get higher degrees by improving their salaries and, in the private sector, by including academic qualifications of the staff as a criterion in assessment procedures.

In the state universities of São Paulo the ranks are auxiliary, assistant, doctor professor, associate, and full professor (*auxiliar, assistente, professor doutor, associado, titular*). A doctorate is required for the doctor professor's rank. To be promoted to associate professor, it is necessary to pass a *livre docência* exam, reminiscent of the German *Privatdozent* exam. To be promoted to a full professorship, it is necessary to pass a competitive exam. Other states have similar career structures, except for *livre docência,* which is a peculiarity of the São Paulo institutions.

Most private institutions do not have career ladders, but salaries are paid according to the academic degree held by the faculty member. Salaries vary according to academic qualification and seniority. In public institutions, job stability applies to all teachers, regardless of their formal qualification or rank. In the private sector, there is no stability; anyone can be dismissed at any time according to the employer's will, under the private-labor legislation.

Although in principle it is necessary to have a doctorate to teach in higher education, only 22 percent of the teachers have it, ranging from 48.1 percent in public universities to 8.3 percent in private institutions, and there are still a few teachers without a higher education degree at all. The best situation is in the public

universities in the state of São Paulo, where 86 percent of the academic staff hold doctoral degrees. The presence of a large number of teachers without a university degree is usually interpreted as a provisional condition, to be corrected as the qualifications of Brazilian academics improve and the old generation is replaced by the new. In the meantime, lesser degrees, such as a master's and specialization or training certificates, are accepted by the institutions as academic credentials.

Currently, Brazilian universities graduate about 10,000 PhDs a year—a very significant number but still small compared with the need to fill in the 287,000 teaching positions still staffed by lesser-qualified personnel. Moreover, since private, low-cost teaching institutions are not able to pay for full-time staff with advanced degrees, this picture is not likely to change in the foreseeable future.

Contracts

In public institutions, beside the basic salary, remuneration may include benefits related to academic degrees and current or past administrative activity. Full-time, exclusive-dedication academics cannot have other regular employment but may receive research fellowships and additional payment for research and technical activities done within the university. Many public universities have established autonomous foundations that are used to sign research and technical-assistance contracts with public and private agencies and firms that pay additional money for researchers involved in their projects. This practice is not allowed in other branches of the civil service but has been tolerated in the universities. Finally, the actual income of an academic may be increased by court decisions regarding acquired rights affected by changing legislation.

A full-time contract usually means 40 hours of work per week, which should be dedicated to teaching, research, and class preparation. Part-time contracts can be half time or less, for teaching and other activities; per-hour contracts pay only for the number of classes actually delivered by the teacher, not allowing time for class preparation, office hours, research, or institutional activities. In practice, union bargaining and jurisprudence have reduced the difference between these two types of part-time contracts in terms of rights and benefits. In most cases, teachers with part-time or hourly contracts work in more than one institution or combine teaching with other professional activities, facilitated by the fact that most teaching in private universities takes place in the evenings.

Academics in public universities, as civil servants, cannot be dismissed except for grave misconduct. In the private sector, private labor market legislation allows the employee to be dismissed at any time, with some limited compensation. Salaries are the same in all federal universities, according to academic qualifications and rank—regardless of merit, except the acquisition of formal credentials; in the private sector, in principle, salaries can be negotiated case by case.

In public universities, full-time contracts are usually, but not always, exclusive-dedication contracts. A full-time contract without exclusive dedication means

that, outside an academic's 40 hours in the institution, the teacher can have a private practice, teach in the evening in another place, or do external consulting. In principle, none of these external activities are allowed for those with exclusive dedication. In practice, this rule is not fully implemented.

Salaries

Table 6.2 gives the range of monthly salaries for academics in full-time, exclusive-dedication contracts in federal universities; it ranges from R$36,000 to R$153,000 (reais) a year (about US$20,000 to US$87,000, based on an exchange rate of R$1.75 = US$1.00). State universities have their own pay scale. In the state of São Paulo, the corresponding range is from R$3,435 to R$10,216 per month, or between US$25,000 and US$76,000 per year. The admission procedures, promotion rules, and benefits in state universities are similar to those of the federal government.

Although pay scales are the same in all federal universities, there is no national academic mobility; each person is attached to the institution where he or she works. One consequence of this system is little mobility of teachers from one institution to another and no mechanisms for public universities to compete for talent in the country or abroad. There are resources for paying visiting professors for short periods, but it is difficult, although not impossible, for a public university to hire a foreign-born academic for its permanent staff.

Most private institutions do not publish their salary levels or career paths. However, an informal enquiry among several private institutions showed that they pay between R$20 and R$50 per hour for teaching (US$11–US$28), depending on the teacher's academic degree. This means, for a 20-hour, part-time job between US$260 and US$590 a month; but many teachers work only 12 or even fewer hours per week in an institution, which means that they have to work in different institutions or combine teaching with other professional activities to reach a reasonable income.

Table 6.3 presents the main data on income, based on the National Household Survey of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE 2008). The figures refer to monthly income in Brazilian reais in 2008. The estimated number of teachers in the survey is much smaller than the figures reported by the Higher Education Census—96,000 in the public sector against 119,000 in the census; and 112,000 in the private sector against 219,000 in the census (MEC, INEP, n.d.). One possible explanation for the differences is that the census gives information on posts, while the household survey gives information on people who may hold one or more teaching posts; and there may be also sampling errors. As one could expect, this difference is much higher in the private sector, where part-time contracts are the rule.

These data do not distinguish between civil service at the federal, state, or municipal levels. Although most higher education teachers in public institutions

Table 6.2 Academic monthly salaries in federal universities in Brazil, 2010

	Graduation	*Training*	*Specialization*	*MA*	*Doctoral Degree*
Full professor	4,786.62	5,221.96	5,580.63	7,818.69	11,755.05
Associate				7,448.09	11,424.45
Adjunct		3,945.91	4,241.00	5,793.14	7,913.30
Assistant	3,275.82	3,525.01	3,730.17	4,985.00	
Auxiliary	2,814.48	3,001.80	3,190.30		

Source: Ministry of Education, Higher Education Census (MEC, INEP 2011).

Note: Values in Brazilian reais (US$1.00 = R$1.75).

Table 6.3 Mean income of teachers in higher education

	Main work	*All activities*	*% of income from main work*	*Number of cases*
Public sector, civil servant	R$ 4,358.80	R$ 4,967.37	87.7	65,756
Private sector, regular contract	R$ 3,442.72	R$ 4,201.20	81.9	98,835
All public sector	R$ 3,762.73	R$ 4,271.81	88.1	96,000
All private sector	R$ 3,209.21	R$ 3,911.95	82.0	112,026
Total	R$ 3,447.17	R$ 4,062.51	84.9	208,026

Source: Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, National Household Survey (IBGE, PNAD 2008).

Note: Values in Brazilian reais (US$1.00 = R$1.75).

are civil servants, and most of those in the private sector have private working contracts, there are many exceptions to these rules. About 17 percent of those working in the public sector do not have a formal job contract, and 12.6 percent are hired according to the private-law legislation. There is no additional information about the kind of jobs they hold, but they may be, for instance, graduate students working as research or teaching assistants or replacement teachers with temporary contracts, or they may work in municipal institutions that do not have civil service careers. In the private sector, about 9 percent of the higher education teachers do not have a regular working contract. Incomes of those in the public sector are higher than those in the private sector, and incomes of those with regular contracts are higher than those without these contracts. Also, for the civil servants in the public sector, their main salary represents 87.7 percent of their income from all activities; while for those with regular contracts in the public sector, it is only 82 percent, with another 18 percent coming from other sources. One-fourth of the teachers who hold civil servant status earn additional income from a secondary job; for those with private-law contracts, 32 percent do. This

Table 6.4 Mean income in higher education, via occupation groups

	Mean Income
Employers	6,356.13
Medical doctors	5,836.52
Analysts, operation engineers	5,290.66
System analysts	4,044.02
Teachers in higher education, public sector	3,762.73
Managers	3,710.33
Dentists	3,692.37
Administrator, business adviser	3,542.71
Agronomist	3,502.74
Accountant	3,458.64
Police officer	3,365.51
Lawyer, attorney, judge, prosecutor	3,296.23
Teachers in the private sector	3,207.21
Architects, civil engineers	3,082.18
Total with higher education	2,780.04

Source: Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, National Household Survey (IBGE, PNAD 2008).

Note: Monthly salaries in Brazilian reais (US$1.00 = R$1.75).

proportion is likely to be still higher, given the propensity of persons not to fully report the income earned outside their main job.

Table 6.4 compares higher education teacher salaries with those of other selected groups of higher education. To be a higher education teacher in Brazil means to have income above average for persons with higher education. For those in the public sector, the income is not as good as that of medical doctors, top-level engineers, and of those in business; but is better than the income of those in other, less prestigious occupations. Earnings for those in the private sector are closer to the average for persons in higher education, similar to architects, civil engineers, and data-processing specialists. It allows for comfortable middle-class lifestyle, particularly if there are two higher education salary earnings in the family.

Distribution of Academic Activities

This section deals with what the academics actually do with their time in terms of teaching, research, and other activities. The information comes from the International Comparative Survey on the Academic Profession, carried out in Brazil in 2007 (Balbachevsky and Schwartzman 2009; Balbachevsky et al. 2008). The sample of 1,200 respondents included academics in public and private institutions as well as in nonuniversity scientific research centers and institutes. For the

Table 6.5 Hours worked per week in different activities, by type of institution

Type of institution	*Public, research intensive*	*Public, other*	*Private, elite*	*Private, others*	*Research institutes*	*Total mean*
Teaching[a]	17.11	19.82	21.17	22.76	12.03	19.87
Research[b]	12.84	9.14	9.3	5.86	20.41	9.36
Extension[c]	2.78	2.6	3.55	2.17	1.09	2.53
Administration[d]	5.41	4.77	6.34	3.24	6.09	4.64
Other academic activities[e]	3.03	2.36	2.17	2.73	2.24	2.54
Total respondents	195	614	60	270	53	1,192

Source: Balbachevsky et al. 2008.

[a]Preparation of instructional materials and lesson plans, classroom instruction, advising students, reading and evaluating student work.

[b]Reading literature, writing, conducting experiments, fieldwork.

[c]Services to clients and/or patients, unpaid consulting, public or voluntary services.

[d]Committees, department meetings, paperwork.

[e]Professional activities not clearly attributable to any of the categories above.

analysis, the respondents were divided on five strata, based on the characteristics of the institutions in which they worked—public, research-intensive universities; other public universities; private, elite institutions; other private institutions; and research institutes (see Table 6.5).

Teachers generally devote half of their time to teaching and related activities, with the heaviest teaching load at private institutions. Research-related activities consume half of the time in research centers but less than 6 percent in private institutions. The third activity is administrative work, about 5 percent of the time; and other activities take another 2 to 3 percent of the time.

In public universities, full-time contracts assume that the teachers will spend half of their time on research. As Table 6.6 shows, the percentage reported by the teachers is closer to 10 hours, or 25 percent of their time, except at research institutes. Still, there are many indications that only a fraction of those reporting to do research are actually engaged in research activities.

Table 6.6 shows that, in the private sector, most teachers have a secondary job; and even among those in the public sector, 18.3 percent have an additional job, either in another teaching institution, a nongovernmental organization, or in private practice. Since the salaries in public institutions are fairly satisfactory, why would those teachers look for additional work? One explanation is the natural desire of every person to raise his or her standard of living; the other is that the demand on one's time in a public university is not very high, creating a space and a longing for other activities.

Given the expectation that all academics should do research and publish, the number of persons reporting to have done research and published is relatively high in all groups. However, in research centers and research-intensive

Table 6.6 Teachers holding second jobs (%)

	Institutions					
	Public, research intensive	*Public, other*	*Private, elite*	*Private, others*	*Research institutes*	*Total mean*
Additional work or job	18.3	30.7	50.6	66.5	24.5	45.7
Secondary work						
Teaching or research institution	6.6	14.5	24.0	39.2	16.3	24.7
Company	2.5	6.4	7.0	18.9	2.0	19.8
Nongovernmental organization	4.6	5.1	6.4	7.8	2.0	6.2
Autonomous, self-employed	6.6	11.8	21.6	19.8	2.0	15.2

Source: Balbachevsky et al. 2008.

universities, research is done with external funding, more articles are published in international publications and in peer-review journals, and international collaboration is more frequent. In nonresearch public and private institutions, external funding is much more limited, most of the publications are in Portuguese, and international cooperation is much reduced.

Conclusion

This overview of the academic salaries in Brazil shows that there are two main types of higher education institutions in the country—public and private. Public institutions operate within limitations and policies set by the government and are supported with public funds; private institutions may be for profit or not and depend mostly on tuition fees. Within the public sector, it is possible to distinguish research-intensive institutions from those that are mostly teaching places. There is little research done at private institutions, but it is also possible to distinguish a small number of private, elite institutions, catering to high-income groups, from a larger sector of low-cost, teaching-only institutions, which comprises the bulk of higher education in Brazil today.

The salary conditions of teachers working in public and private institutions are quite different. Salaries in the public sector are higher, and there are more fringe benefits and a lighter teaching load. Most contracts are full time, but the teachers also have the possibility of earning additional income by participating in research projects, doing consultancy, and other activities—even when their work contract is for exclusive dedication. Teachers in public institutions cannot be fired or move to other institutions, and promotion is based primarily on seniority and acquired credentials. Salaries are the same for all federal universities and for all state universities within a state and cannot be negotiated individually. It is difficult for

a non-Brazilian to enter the university career in a public institution, although it is allowed by legislation.

In the private sector, most contracts are part time, income is lower, and teachers have to work in more than one place to make ends meet. In all institutions, it is assumed that teachers in higher education should do research, but, in practice, most of those in nonresearch institutions do not receive external support for their projects and are not linked to international research networks.

Compared with other groups, teachers in public institutions are relatively well off, while teachers in private institutions, although earning relatively less, are still above the country's average income for persons with higher education degrees.

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